



What I'd like to see
The table filled with flowers, and the room
with the stock of the company working the
property he had discovered, and this
gave him an excellent opportunity to
see much of the child, and to direct her
studies in his spare hours.

These relations between Frank Hobart and Ella continued for two years, his proving himself to be a bright and grateful pupil, and he manfully hiding from her and the world the new and powerful feeling that such association had developed in his big, generous heart. By the time she was seventeen, Ella Lanston had become the toast of every mining camp for fifty miles about, and more than one rich gallant had laid his heart and his fortune at her feet.

Mrs. Lanston, who had been a wife since her sixteenth year, would have insisted on her daughter's marriage at this time, had not Frank Hobart induced the parents to send her for two years to the best young ladies' seminary at Denver.

"Frank Hobart must be married that gal, if he'd just had the cheek to tell her that he loved her, as he most certainly does; but, like a blamed coot, he sets the Gals and Mrs. Lanston ter

send Ella off to school at the other side of the world. When she comes back in two years, she won't be Frank's no more, she'll be in the Glen, and the chances is a thousand for one that she'll be engaged to some dandy dude or eastern tenderfoot."

This is what Sam Britton, the mining boss, said to his friends after Ella had gone with her father and Frank to Denver, and that is what all the miners believed.

Time flies fast with the aged and the busy. It was Christmas eve, 1898, and Lanston's Glen was in a state of great excitement. The "sagebrush belle" was coming over on the stage that evening from Salt Lake City, and one and all agreed to have a ball at the Grand Occidental hotel in honor of her arrival.

During Ella's absence Frank Hobart had visited Denver once, but the camp gossip was quite sure that he and the young lady corresponded. "But I'll bet," Sam Britton would say, "that Frank ain't never had the spunk to set down in black and white the four words 'Ella, I love you.' And Sam was quite right.

Capt. Lanston went to Denver to bring his daughter home, and it was understood before he left that Howard Ford, the son of the president of the mine, who lived in Colorado City and at whose home Ella had been a visitor, would come back with them. Frank Hobart brought, at his own expense, a band from Salt Lake, to play at the ball; and the day before Christmas eve he drove into the mountains with his Chinese servant and cut evergreens to decorate the dining and ball rooms.

When the stage drove up with Ella, her father and young Howard Ford, it was greeted with a grand salute from every gun and pistol in the Glen. All the miners were dressed in their best, though this did not prevent a preponderance of red shirts; and, following Sam Britton's lead, they gave three cheers and a tiger for the "sagebrush belle."

Ella had grown taller and more comely, if that were possible. Two years of careful culture and intellectual association had destroyed the somewhat boyish expression of her face, and so rather repelled her old admirers, with whom heartiness and a boisterous recognition went hand in hand.

"I couldn't give shucks for Frank Hobart as a lover," growled Sam Britton, after Frank had lifted Ella from the stage. "Why, he didn't even kiss her, after these years and all he's done; and now she comes back this blessed Christmas eve with a dude, just as I said she would, two years ago."

As compared with the rough miners in and about the hotel at the Glen Mr. Howard Ford was a fashionable exquisite. Although under medium height, and five years Frank Hobart's junior, he was not bad looking, and, being the mine president's son, he was at this moment the most important man at Lanston's Glen.

There were tall, wholesome, bright-eyed girls by the score from the Glen and the surrounding mountain settlements at the Grand Occidental hotel this Christmas eve, and although the ball and banquet in Ella's honor might be lacking in some of the refinements essential in the fashionable world, they were distinguished for a heartiness and a freshness of enjoyment that put everyone at ease.

"Why don't you go up and dance with Ella?" said Sam Britton to the young superintendent, after the dance had been going on for some time. "That little dude has kept her all to himself ever since the frolic began."

"I haven't danced since I was a boy," said Frank, who, from his position at the farther end of the room, had been following with his eyes the young movement of Ella.

"Well, I think you as good a dancer as most of the boys here, and if you don't as Ella blushed at I don't get her to dance you." And before Frank could think of protesting Sam Britton had darted off.

The mining boss had plenty of assurance, and he firmly believed that if the young superintendent had more of the quality his character would be

amusing the injuries and easing the awful pain of the young man, who was now quite conscious, though he could only speak in whispers.

From the instant of his rescue Ella had not left his side; and now, when the doctors had bathed him in lotions and covered his poor blistered face with a moistened cloth, she asked: "Is there hope?"

"I think he will pull through," said one of the doctors, "but I fear he can never use these again," and he pointed to his eyes.

"No Frank!" she cried, as she kissed the bandaged hands. "You brought me light when I was in darkness, and gave me love when my heart hungered; and now, if it be God's will, my eyes shall be your eyes, and my hands your hands, and my life your life!"

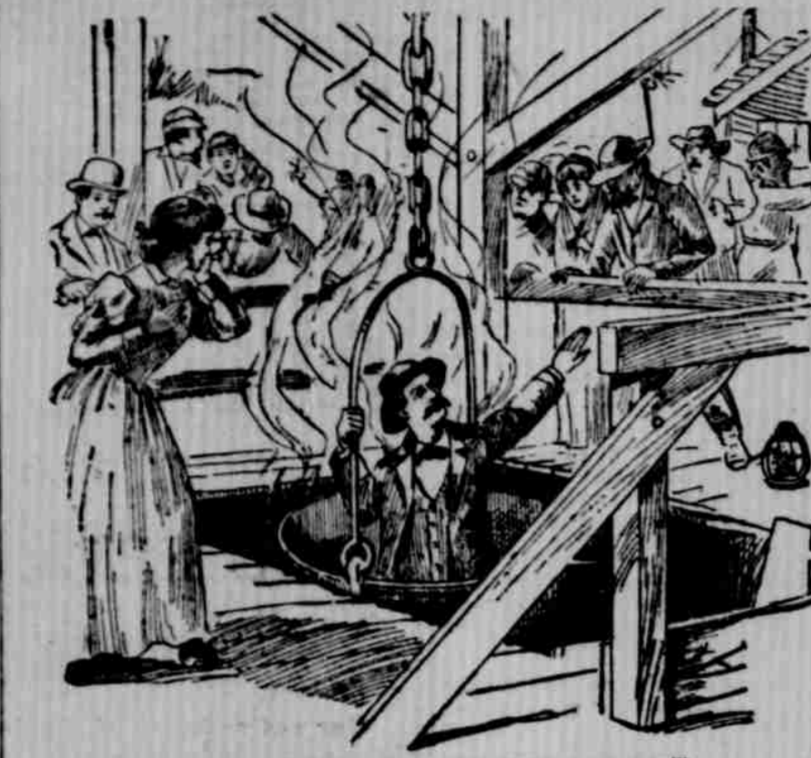
And the striking of a bell on the mantel told that Christmas eve had gone and Christmas day had come.

Exactly one year afterward there were again grand preparations for a fête at Lanston's Glen. Frank Hobart and the girl who had married him when his future seemed so black were returning from the east. They had been there for ten months, where the foremost oculists had charge of the case.

News came that Frank's sight was restored, and that, except for the cruel scars, that enhanced his beauty to his wife, he was, as Sam Britton put it: "Better than new."

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"MAKE READY TO LOWER ME DOWN!"

two's the handsomest Kippie at the ball."

Like one in a dream, Frank Hobart felt the thrilling touch of Ella's hand on his arm, and quite sure that he was about to disgrace himself in her eyes, he took his place beside her at the head of the set, while other couples came laughing to the floor.

The band leader tapped his bow on his violin as a signal to the musicians and the dancers. The salute was given, and the quick first bars of "Haste to the Wedding" swelled out; but suddenly the music ceased, and the dancers stood spellbound, with aghast faces.

"The mine's on fire!" came the hoarse shout of men.

"There are eleven men still down!" shrieked a woman.

There was no indecision about Frank Hobart now. Without a word he sprang from Ella's side, shouting as he flew to the door: "Follow me to the mine, boys!"

Like a mountain lion he leaped ahead and dashed down the winding steps cut in the precipitous side of the canyon, at the bottom of which was the opening of the mine shaft, from which a fountain of smoke was shooting up.

Men followed with lanterns and torches. The festivities for that Christmas eve were over till it was known that the men in the mine were safe. The women, Ella at their head, ran down to the canyon, their faces looking aged and white in the light of the torches.

"Make ready to lower me down!" shouted Frank Hobart as he leaped into the bucket, "and stand by to haul up and answer signals!"

"I'll go with you," cried Sam Britton. "No; let some man come who has no wife or mother or loved one dependent on him."

A tall young man in a very red shirt sprang to Frank's side. The engine was started, and the bucket sank into the shaft, now vomiting forth hot smoke like a volcano.

"Let me take you home, Miss Ella; this is no place for you," said Howard Ford.

Shaking his hand from her arm with an impatient gesture, she answered: "Near him is my place, in life or in death."

Minutes of awful anxiety, then the signal: "Haul away!" The chain flew about the drum, the bucket flew up through the shaft, and six men, all the bucket could hold—six burned and blackened men, but still living, thank God!—were lifted out.

"Lower away—quick!" gasped one of the rescued.

Down through the shaft the bucket rattled again. A few minutes, that seemed like hours of awful anxiety, and once more the signal came up: "Haul away!"

Up, up, six men, blacker and more burned, were lifted out.

"Where is Frank Hobart?" shouted Ella.

"The car would only hold six. He—made us get in," said the man who had gone down with the young superintendent. A groan of horror rang through the crowd and Ella tottered towards the bucket, as if to get in.

"God helping me, I'll bring him up! Lower away, boys!" Sam Britton, with his wife's hand about his head and face and her cry ringing in his ears, leaped into the bucket and it vanished into the furnace as if by force of gravity.

More minutes, that seemed like hours, and the signal, a faint one this time, for the fire was gaining, was given: "Haul away!"

When the bucket came up Sam Britton tottered out and with parched lips whispered:

"Keep for Frank."

They lifted the blackened form out, and the shrieks of the women and the groans of the men. The eyes appeared to be gone, and the smoking rays dropped from his limbs as they laid him on a stretcher and hurried him up to his room in the hotel.

Fortunately, there were two doctors present from neighboring mining camps, and these at once set about

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What a weird reflection of sounds plays in its muffled harp!—the low sigh as the dream breath of the zephyr stirs in it; the pathetic moan as the swell of the breeze phrases its rising and falling cadences; the long drawn wail of the wind as it blows down the echoing canyon; the howl of the red savage as the fury of the blast smites its wry head and seems its twisted trunk. It is furtive, stealthy, secluded. It listens. It points with tasseled finger tips to the wizardry of its black sandals on the snowy turf. There is a whisper, a cry, a step in its strown shadow. It is the silhouette of old night. The dusk face came out of its dark. But there is a burial trait of the pine tree which has been strangely overlooked even by denological writers. It is the secret process of embalming, particularly in a dry, rainless air, which, preserving a corpse, makes it a true mummy case. To this melancholy tree the Navajo mother goes on only one errand—to bury a stillborn child.

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"Born dead," I replied; "a mother's strangest sorrow."

Determined to satisfy myself thoroughly about a thing which is considered the most curious mortuary custom of any Indian tribe, I dismounted from my horse, who had secured for me by his keen sense the opportunity of seeing what I had heard about but never found, and, leaving the well-trained creature standing unfastened on the trail, approached the tree. As I did so I saw that the object was plainly a little particle, blackened and stiff with burial boards, one of which had fallen to the ground. I also saw that the branches of the tree leading up to the burial case were barked near the trunk, one above another, as if they had been climbed by the feet of persons anxious to see such a rare and peculiar object of curiosity. In ascending the tree limb by limb I reached, at last, the little grave. A jealous crow called out overhead to me as I bent over it searching. Sure enough, there lay the little whitened skeleton. Some of the bones were missing, but still enough remained to tell the story. The creature

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HARD ON THE STOMACH.

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The human stomach possesses most wonderful powers of adaptation to circumstances. When Lieut. Bligh and his eighteen men were cast off from the Bounty by the mutineers in an open boat they subsisted forty-one days on a daily allowance of one-twenty-fifth of a pound of biscuit per man and a quarter of a pint of water. Dr. Tanner in 1880 fasted for forty days, subsisting, it is said, on water alone, and Succi and other fasting men have since excelled this.

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Hints for Christmas.

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At Christmas time it is well enough to ape the English as far as the plum pudding is concerned.

Some persons never wish you a merry Christmas unless they think they will get something for doing so.

The bachelor who puts his thumb into the boarding-house Christmas pie is apt to pull out a collar button.—Judge.

Out of Small Change.

The financial straits of Italy are growing worse from day to day. Coin is decreasing at a rate as rapid as to cause universal consternation and inconvenience in trade. Storekeepers are issuing notes payable at sight in their stores. These notes vary in amounts from a quarter dollar to a few cents, some being as low as two cents. Instead of allowing this natural means for tiding over the calamitous period to proceed unnoticed, the police have at some places arrested tradesmen for infringing upon the privilege of the crown by making money. Public opinion is in favor of allowing tradesmen to continue in the course. But no one can say what the end of the police prosecutions will be, nor how and when the calamity will end.

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